



Town of Groton, Connecticut

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Town Clerk 860-441-6640
Town Manager
860-441-6630

Meeting Minutes

Representative Town Meeting

Wednesday, August 9, 2017

7:30 PM

Groton Senior Center

REGULAR MEETING

Moderator Scott Newsome opened the meeting at 7:36pm.

A. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Moderator Newsome, Rep. Adams, Rep. Bailey, Rep. Bauer, Rep. Kent, Rep. Hubbard, Rep. Gilly, Rep. McDermott, Rep. Merritt, Rep. Nault, Rep. Neugent, Rep. Obrey, Rep. Parker, Rep. Pasqualini Jr., Rep. Powers, Rep. Steinfeld, Rep. Slieker-Hersant, Rep. Welles and Rep. Wilson
Members Absent: Rep. Baker, Rep. Baril, Rep. Burgos, Jr., Rep. Casper, Rep. Cini, Rep. Deane-Shinbrot, Rep. Evans, Rep. Frickman, Rep. Garcia, Rep. Longino, Rep. Loughlin, Rep. Maher, Rep. Marley, Rep. Massett, Rep. McCabe, Rep. Quinn, Rep. Streeter, Rep. Swindell, Rep. Wagner, Rep. Watrous and Rep. Williams

Town Clerk Betsy Moukawsher read the roll and announced that nineteen members were present.

Moderator Newsome stated that twenty-one members are needed for a quorum. He declared that there was no quorum with only nineteen members present. He stated that there was no business to vote on except the minutes from the June 14, 2017 meeting. He invited members present to stay in order to hear the new Town Manager's report, the Superintendent of School's report, and a special report from the Chief of Police.

B. MOMENT OF SILENCE AND SALUTE TO THE FLAG

The members observed a moment of silence followed by the Salute to the Flag.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JUNE 14, 2017

Not voted on.

D. CITIZENS' PETITIONS

None.

E. RECEPTION OF COMMUNICATIONS

Moderator Newsome stated that Reps. Baker, Casper, Cini, Deane-Shinbrot, Massett, and McCabe had notified the Town Clerk of their absence.

F. REPORT OF THE TOWN MANAGER

1. Financial report

Town Manager John Burt reported that the unaudited Fund Balance as of June 30, 2017 is approximately \$11 million which represents 9.1% of the FYE 2017 General Fund Adopted Budget. He reported that the Capital Reserve Fund balance as of June 30, 2017 was estimated at \$1.8 million and the General Contingency budget for FYE 2018 was appropriated at \$650,000. He stated that no funds have been appropriated from Contingency.

2. Monthly briefing

Town Manager John Burt stated that he had been directed by the Town Council to put in place a hiring and spending freeze. He stated that new hires will only be accepted under extreme vetting. He stated that only necessary position will be filled until the State budget is known. He stated that the Town Council left him with the latitude to develop a plan for all employees. He stated that he will direct staff to limit spending. He stated that they are also working on retirement options for

new employees. He stated that the Zoning Board of Appeals granted a zone change from R2 Residential to CA12 Commercial for the William Seely School last week. He reviewed a memorandum on the Enterprise Resource Planning System that was part of a Capital Improvement Plan. He reported that the IT Master Plan now includes a Public Safety Master Plan. He stated that he will be pushing to update the 911 radio system as a high priority for the next Town Budget cycle.

G. REPORT ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

None.

H. REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Dr. Graner gave an update on the School 2020 Plan. He stated that the Permanent School Buildings Committee had finished its interviews of the five architect firm candidates and are now down to two firms competing for the contract. He stated that the nomination will be referred to the Town Council for final approval. He stated that the architects will have to wait until the State budget has passed and commitment to funding is approved before they can begin. He reported on school finances with the General Fund having a balance of \$247,000. He stated that once the 2017 FYE is complete, there will be more funds available in the General Fund. He reported on the Department of Defensive Impact Aide grant that is for technology use only. He stated that the grant this year was for \$260,000 and computers were purchase for staff and students. He noted that this money is not in the budget. He stated that the first day of school is scheduled for August 31, 2017. He explain that the \$2.3 million is expected to be received from the Federal Impact Aide for Education grant. In response to Rep. Merritt, Dr. Graner stated that the property swap for the Merritt Farm has been finalized and that the entrance for the new school has approval for the location on Fort Hill Road. He stated that there is a possibility that access from the Grasso Tech School property may be granted as an alternative entrance. Dr. Graner stated that the project is about three years out, if they were to receive funding from the State today. In response to Rep. Neugent, Dr. Graner stated that the staff levels have been reduced as a result of the closure of Pleasant Valley School. He stated that the children of the Pleasant Valley School visited their new schools last spring and that the transition went very smoothly. In response to Rep. Obrey, Dr. Graner explained the racial diversity formula. He stated that when a town makes a good faith effort in trying to address the imbalance issue and fails, it may qualify for a diversity grant toward new construction. In response to Rep. Kent, Dr. Graner stated that the BOE is still in the process of hiring teachers and that he would prefer to provide a complete report when it is available. He stated that revenues from the State are still unknown, and therefore hiring has been delayed.

I. SPECIAL REPORT AND PRESENTATION BY POLICE CHIEF FUSARO

Chief Fusaro reported that body worn cameras have been purchased using a grant. He stated that all patrol officers will be issued a camera. Representatives were giving an opportunity to review the device. In response to Rep. Pasquilini, Chief Fusaro stated that after the grant is used, there will be a \$20,000 to \$30,000 annual cost in suppling new cameras. He stated that there is an additional storage fee associated with the data collection. In response to Rep Neugent, he stated that a detailed policy will be distributed and that officers will be using the cameras during any active interaction with citizens. He stated that this is for protection of both the citizens and the officers. In response to Rep. Parker, Chief Fusaro stated that they have entered into a five-year contract. He stated that as part of the contract, the cameras will be replaced after thirty months. He stated that they have a standard warranty that protects the devices. He stated that the cameras cost \$399.00 each and that they can purchase more, but that he doesn't anticipate any additional need. In response to Moderator Newsome, Chief Fusaro stated that the data that he has reviewed shows that body cameras may reduce use of force incidents and complaints against officers.

Chief Fusaro reported that there have been no reports of CO2 problems in any of the town vehicles. He reported that they have installed CO2 indicators in all vehicles.

Chief Fusaro review the current radio system that is in use. He reported on the findings of current

vender analysis in repairing the system. He stated that he will be including a five to ten-year investment request in the upcoming budget. In response to Rep. Wilson, Chief Fusaro stated that the approved FYE 2017 Emergency Communications Capitol Improvement Project for \$100,000 was used for a study to review communications between the City and Town Police Departments and to purchase additional radios. Chief Fusaro explained that the current radio system needs improvement to meet the needs of today.

J. LIAISON REPORTS

None.

K. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. FINANCE - Chairman Nault

No meeting, no report.

2. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & SERVICES -Chairman Obrey

No meeting, no report.

3. EDUCATION - Chairman Neugent

No meeting, no report.

4. RECREATION - Chairman Wilson

No meeting, no report.

5. PUBLIC SAFETY - Chairman McDermott

No meeting, no report.

6. PUBLIC WORKS - Chairman Deane-Shinbrot

No meeting, no report.

7. RULES & PROCEDURES - Chairman Massett

No meeting, no report.

L. BUDGET DISCUSSIONS

None.

M. OTHER BUSINESS

Rep. McDermott requested a referral to the Rules and Procedures Committee to review Sec. 8.1 which addresses conflict of interest. He offered a recommendation that when committees are set up, the chairperson and members of that committee have no relationship by way of receiving remuneration and that they are not an employee of the Town, Board of Education, or any subdivision. He stated that the Charter Revision Commission is recommending that no Town or BOE employee sit on a governmental body.

He suggested that committee memberships be changed with every newly elected RTM and to make this policy effective as of the 2017 election. He stated that longevity has no substantial benefit. He stated that some members have obvious particularity toward one or more of the standing committees. He stated that a dispassionate consideration of the budget is paramount and more important than our partialities. He offered suggestions for a selection procedure.

Moderator Newsome stated that rule 8.1 of the RTM Rules and Procedures describes conflict of interest. He stated that he believes the language to be vague. He requests that the Rules Committee review this language and make recommendation on any clarification to the RTM.

N. ADJOURNMENT

Moderator Newsome adjourned the meeting at 9:08 p.m.

Attest:

*Betsy Moukawsher
Groton Town Clerk
Clerk of the RTM*